

Today marks World AIDS Day, a time for people around the world to come together against the epidemic that is HIV/AIDS.

Over the past twenty-five years, AIDS has reached every corner of the globe including here at home where 1 million Americans are currently living with the disease, approximately 42,000 are in Illinois alone. Globally the disease has taken over 20 million lives and another 39 million people are currently infected with HIV/AIDS.

The United States, as a leader of research and innovation must continue to find new treatments, better preventions and eventually a cure. Much of the work to combat HIV/AIDS is happening right here in the 10<sup>th</sup> District. Abbott Laboratories currently produces the leading HIV/AIDS drug, Kaletra, and is at the forefront of lifesaving research.

We also are fortunate to have one of the strongest advocacy organizations in the country. The AIDS Foundation of Chicago, led by Executive Director Mark Ishaug and Policy Director Jim Pickett, is pivotal in advancing policy initiatives, administering funding for care and treatment, and educating Chicagoland on HIV/AIDS.

In the coming months Congress needs to effectively reauthorize the Ryan White CARE Act, ensuring Illinois receives a fair share of crucial HIV/AIDS funding.

In Washington, I will continue to work on a legislative agenda that is pro-science, supports increased funding for the National Institutes of Health and will work to end HIV/AIDS.

Please take a moment to observe World AIDS Day by putting on a red ribbon, talking to your friends and learning ways we can treat and eventually cure HIV/AIDS.